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Letter dated 27 February 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 17 February 2001 from Mr. Muhammad Zimam Abd al-Razzaq, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Iraq. The Minister describes the difficulties encountered by the installations operated by the Ministry that are caused by the holds placed on contracts under the memorandum of understanding for items relevant to the Ministry's work that are essential to the provision of potable water and for sanitation and waste disposal services. There are 59 such contracts dating from phase V to phase VIII, and their total value is 168,200,767 dollars.

The Minister expresses the hope that you will take an active role in urging the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) to approve the contracts that are on hold.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 27 February 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We reaffirm the substance of our letter dated 5 July 2000 addressed to you concerning the great difficulties encountered by the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Iraq in performing its functions and providing municipal services to citizens, and most particularly potable water, in all governorates, districts and sub-districts. This is because of the unlawful practices, based on grounds that lack all logic, of the representatives of the United States of America and the United Kingdom in the Security Council Committee established by resolution 661 (1990) in placing contracts concluded under the memorandum of understanding on hold. All of the contracts placed on hold are nevertheless those most particularly relevant, in humanitarian terms, to the lives of citizens, namely those relevant to access to potable water, the provision of municipal services, the prevention of environmental pollution and sewage disposal, which are basic and minimum requirements for human subsistence.

That the United States and the United Kingdom place humanitarian contracts on hold is a flagrant violation of the most elementary principles of human conduct, a manifest breach of the provisions of international covenants and a gross offence against basic human rights as determined by the United Nations. By means of discriminatory practices that seek narrow political objectives, the principles of human rights have in the hands of the United States and the United Kingdom been transformed into a political weapon, a selective measure governed by double standards and a means of blackmail and political pressure. This undermines the worthy core objectives of concern for human rights.

Sufficient to prove this are the many statements that have been made by the chiefs of United Nations agencies operating in Iraq confirming that the blanket embargo and the thousands of air raids launched against Iraq have denied the Iraqi people its basic human rights. The embargo and the aggression have killed and injured thousands of people and have caused the deaths of more than a million and a half children as well as growing poverty, the spread of unemployment and the deterioration of health services. Such statements have also affirmed that the standard of living of the population of Iraq has fallen below normal levels since the embargo was imposed and that the capacity of the health care system to function has declined because of shortages of water and electric power, lack of transport and the collapse of the communications system. Waterborne contagious diseases have, moreover, become part of an established pattern in the alarming health situation in Iraq.

There are 59 contracts relevant to the work of the Ministry that have been placed on hold by the Committee and their total value is 168,200,767 dollars. All of them relate to water and sanitation, a basic sector and one of special importance. The holds placed on them give rise to serious risks of epidemics among citizens as a result of accumulated refuse, failure to clear blockages in sanitation systems, the difficulty of purifying water of contaminants and pollutants, the failure to maintain waterworks and repair leaks in old piping, the disuse of water treatment compact units because the necessary chemicals are not available, the impossibility of transporting workers to sites, the absence of communications with and between plant sites and pumping and booster stations and the inability to cope with emergencies. The situation is even worse when it is noted that most water and

sanitation systems in Iraq are old and have become unserviceable. They have been out of service for many years. I am sending you herewith a schedule giving details of the contracts that are on hold (see enclosure).

It is clear from the schedule of contracts on hold that all of them are relevant to the provision of water to citizens and that their purpose is humanitarian. This fact means that procrastination or delay cannot be permitted. The schedule also shows the serious risks to citizens that have been created by the malicious policy being pursued by the United States and British aggressors. This policy is pursued in implementation of a hostile scheme to turn the economic embargo into an instance of genocide, and this necessarily entails legal accountability under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide approved by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

What makes matters even worse and makes the work of the Ministry even more difficult is that, despite the small number of Ministry contracts and the limited range of items sought, these contracts are largely on hold and only a tiny number of them have been fulfilled. Those placed on hold have been the most important and the most relevant to the lives of citizens, who are in the most pressing need of the items ordered. Is it possible to imagine the condition in which Iraqis live as a result of this situation? They are deprived of any draught of potable water, of any wholesome sustaining morsel, of any fully healthy life. Children drink contaminated water. Epidemics encompass the entire daily life of the people. This is truly a catastrophe such as mankind has never seen, and it is an affront to humanity. All fair and honest people must rise up against it and must confront the demon, ward off its evil belligerence and end its hidden machinations against a people that has suffered bitterly and on which it has placed a heavy burden under the cover of the United Nations. The malicious practices that follow on United States and British policy are based on incoherent political considerations that are hostile to the people of Iraq.

The genocidal crimes and gross violations of international humanitarian law that are being committed against the people of Iraq with an arrogance prompted by an obtuse and unfeeling conscience have been clearly perceived by the world. It has expressed condemnation and anger for the holds constantly placed on contracts by the United States and the United Kingdom. The tendentious political motives that underlie this practice have become obvious to the world. Despite this fact, it seems that in its resolution 1330 (2000) the Security Council can only urge the Committee "to review applications in an expeditious manner" and "to decrease the level of applications on hold", rather than have it devise a radical solution. For reasons that are flimsy at best, the Council does not name the two countries that are placing contracts on hold.

To ignore Iraq's rights and wishes and its freedom to invest its wealth to serve its people and secure its subsistence requirements is to violate the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966. This cannot be a matter of indifference, and it cannot be accepted or passed over in silence given Iraq's commitment to the exalted principles and worthy purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and the country's respect for its association with the Organization as a body concerned with matters such as prompted Iraq to join it, to adhere to its principles and to maintain active membership. We can assure you that impeding the fulfilment of the contracts in question will have extremely adverse and dangerous consequences for the efforts

of the Ministry to provide water and municipal and sanitation services, to combat epidemics and to cope with pollution as well as for the efforts of our agencies to perform duties that are important to the lives of citizens.

We hope that you will take an active and fruitful role in urging the Committee to approve the contracts that are on hold and thus restore confidence in the mission of the United Nations and in its humanitarian purposes.

(*Signed*) Muhammad Zimam **Abd al-Razzaq**
Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Iraq

Enclosure
Contracts on hold in the water and sanitation sector

Phase	*Number*	*Item*	*Date registered*	*Date placed on hold*	*Value (dollars)*
V	50877	Spare parts for water treatment compact units	08/06/99	07/10/99	909 450
V	501232	Well pumps	08/11/99	17/11/99	305 000
V	50932	Cranes	17/06/99	07/10/99	5 680 000
V	501145	Water hammer system	10/08/99	11/11/99	1 300 000
V	50845	Chlorine gas	28/05/99	11/06/99	975 000
VI	601433	Electrical equipment	04/01/00	10/04/00	3 050 000
VI	600769	Water treatment compact unit	02/11/99	5/10/00	12 600 000
VI	601786	Sewer-cleaning equipment	09/11/98	22/07/00	1 062 006
VI	601647	Pumps	28/01/00	30/10/00	78 000
VI	601645	Miscellaneous valves	28/01/00	28/11/00	28 870
VI	600832	Fire-fighting vehicles	12/11/99	10/12/00	9 780 000
VI	601797	Ventilators	10/04/00	28/11/00	19 200
VI	600701	Chlorinators	27/10/99	17/11/99	1 700 000
VI	601540	Alum dosing pumps	18/01/00	26/04/00	675 000
VI	601783	Aluminium hydroxide	30/03/00	20/11/00	965 000
VI	601655	Precision instruments	07/02/00	30/11/00	174 075
VI	601615	Special valves	07/02/00	01/12/00	40 082
VI	601616	Special pumps	28/01/00	15/08/00	494 585
VI	601646	Anodes and cell covers	28/01/00	27/11/00	456 800
VI	601868	Compressors	07/07/00	08/12/00	447 510
VII	701950	Computers	18/08/00	08/09/00	1 950 000
VII	701576	Truck with crane	25/07/00	15/08/00	1 770 000
VII	701973	Equipment	21/08/00	01/10/00	21 780 000
VII	701586	Equipment for town sewer project	25/07/00	05/09/00	3 500 000
VII	701584	Equipment for Nasiriyah sewer project	25/07/00	08/09/00	2 750 000
VII	702469	Equipment	16/11/00	29/11/00	60 000
VII	[?]	Electrical and mechanical equipment for water treatment compact units	14/08/00	08/09/00	5 370 000
VII	701202	Chlorine booster pumps	22/06/00	03/08/00	2 350 000
VII	700798	Hoses	10/05/00	18/05/00	400 000
VII	702243	Aluminium hydroxide	29/09/00	17/10/00	2 999 997
VII	700920	Low loaders	31/05/00	09/06/00	5 280 000
VII	702284	Measuring gauges	02/10/00	15/12/00	1 913 001
VII	701566	Fire engine — command	20/07/00	15/12/00	1 060 000
VII	701526	Fire engine — command	18/07/00	04/08/00	1 060 000
VII	702332	Raw materials	06/10/00	27/11/00	720 930
VII	702424	Breathing apparatus	06/11/00	04/12/00	423 000

Phase	*Number*	*Item*	*Date registered*	*Date placed on hold*	*Value (dollars)*
VII	702333	Command vehicles	06/10/00	08/11/00	825 000
VII	701321	Spare parts	06/07/00	01/08/00	590 000
VII	700712	Electrical equipment	27/04/00	03/07/00	3 286 685
VII	700713	Electrical equipment	27/04/00	05/07/00	4 380 582
VII	702007	Tanker trucks	23/08/00	12/09/00	500 000
VII	701748	Tanker trucks	07/08/00	22/08/00	2 310 000
VII	702511	Air compressors	04/12/00	12/12/00	22 555
VII	701839	Laboratory equipment	14/08/00	01/09/00	420 000
VII	702331	Water treatment compact unit	06/10/00	18/10/00	12 570 000
VII	701609	Well pumps	27/07/00	11/08/00	680 000
VII	701072	Chlorine gas	31/05/00	01/10/00	2 695 000
VII	702462	Vehicles	14/11/00	25/11/00	3 140 000
VII	702364	Fire-fighting vehicles	11/10/00	25/10/00	1 750 000
VII	702365	Fire-fighting vehicles	11/10/00	25/10/00	5 836 000
VII	702349	Fire-fighting vehicles	10/10/00	21/11/00	2 075 000
VII	701057	Well-boring equipment	31/05/00	30/06/00	12 000 000
VIII	800796	Booster pumps	28/11/00	04/12/00	1 223 516
VIII	800626	Vehicles	06/11/00	14/11/00	2 378 001
VIII	800882	Vehicles	30/11/00	12/12/00	935 000
VIII	801066	Electricity cables	10/12/00	26/12/00	2 415 000
VIII	800207	Aluminium hydroxide	27/09/00	20/10/00	1 499 922
VIII	800979	Graders	08/12/00	31/12/00	2 706 000
VIII	800941	Dump truck	05/12/00	15/12/00	13 530 000